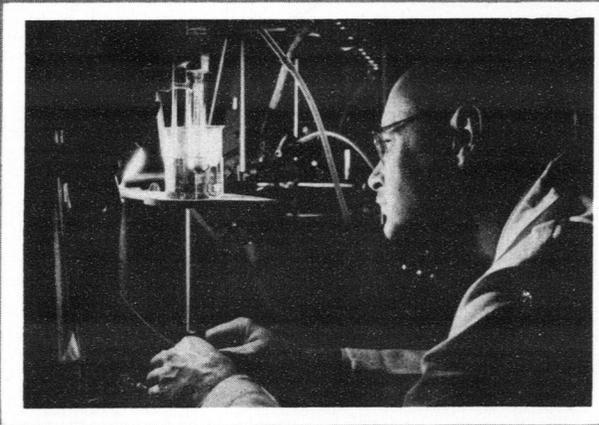


*Safeguarding the health of wage earners*



**research**



**service**

*see overleaf*

# Elements of Occupational Health Programs

An international group of experts jointly convened by the International Labor Organization and the World Health Organization in Geneva in 1950 agreed that "Occupational health should aim at: the promotion and maintenance of the highest degree of physical, mental, and social well-being of workers in all occupations; the prevention among workers of departures from health caused by their working conditions; the protection of workers in their employment from risks resulting from factors adverse to health; the placing and maintenance of the worker in an occupational environment adapted to his physiological and psychological equipment, and, to summarize: the adaptation of work to man and of each man to his job."

A second report of the group deals broadly with measures of general health protection of workers in places of employment, notification of occupational diseases, organization of health service programs in large and small plants and agricultural enterprises, and methods of cooperation between public health and industrial health services.

Recognizing that effective action requires "close cooperation with community health agencies working on parallel problems," *nutrition* of workers is seen as a concern of occupational health. Education not only of workers but of the housewife who prepares his meals is underscored. In the matter of *communicable disease control* the general objective everywhere is to detect cases and render them noninfectious. "This objective is especially important in industry, not only because there are hazards of infection of large numbers of persons in the working environment, but also because the place of employment provides valuable opportunities for the finding, treatment, and rehabilitation of cases."

Among *maternal and child health* considerations, "the protection of the health of pregnant women who are employed is of the first importance." The objective of *mental health* activities

is "to promote the health and happiness of people at work" and the way to do it is "not the provision of psychiatric services, but the planning of work tasks and patterns of industrial organization which do not run counter to human emotional needs."

*Environmental sanitation* is important for the prevention of spread of disease by water, food, air, or other means, and for avoiding the creation by industry of sanitary hazards for the surrounding community. *Health education* is a basic need, since "the effectiveness of all health service activities is directly related to the understanding and knowledge of the workers." *Nursing services* in the community "should be closely related to the medical service of the plant."

The general objective is to coordinate the official and unofficial services "so as to accomplish the largest volume of public health effort at a minimum expense to the community," such programs providing for "the complete cooperation on the local level of all the agencies having a bearing on the health of the worker."

—Joint ILO/WHO Committee on Occupational Health, Second Report. World Health Organization Technical Report Series, No. 66, July 1953.

## frontispiece . . .

*The insets symbolize the fact that research and service are two sides of the same coin of occupational health. New processes in industry produce new health problems requiring imaginative investigations. New developments in the medical and related sciences offer means of attacking old as well as new problems more effectively. In the September issue of Public Health Reports trends in air pollution control were examined. This month, the matter of occupational disease reporting is explored (page 940). Succeeding issues will report on other elements of occupational health, especially those relating to community and public health relationships.*

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